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ABSTRACT

Child development in Israel takes place in a context of many unique influences. Influences which define the nature of family experience include religion, ethnic group membership, immigrant or non-immigrant status, and urban or rural living. All of these influences are situated within, and further influenced by, the continuous state of military threat and need for defense vigilance. The ideology which formed the state, Zionism, is blended necessarily with the religious precepts of Judaism. These precepts, in surrounding the child with "givens," vary in their effects depending on their value to the child's milieu and to his or her own developing adherences. Most Israeli children live in the urban milieu, where privacy is at a premium and where there is a minimum of planned experience. Though the kibbutzniks comprise only 4% of the population, their environment is so determined, controlled, and ultimately effective that the impact on the nation is much greater than their actual numbers would suggest. For the Arab child in Israel there is a potential for development within a set of environments, the traditional and the innovative. The homes and communities of the Arab children, though essentially rural and religion-bound, differ from those of children in other Arab countries. (Author/SS)

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ENVIRONMENTS FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF ISRAEL

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Environments for Child Development: The Case of Israel

Introduction. In an address at a United Nations conference, René Maheu stressed the concept that environmental, population, and development problems are inextricably bound up with each other.[1]

While Maheu and his audience were concerned with the context of the biological-physical aspects of environment, by implication this context only underlies or shares importance with a range of other environments. With particular reference to the child, scholars have examined those elements which affect the child and which are derived from his social, psychological, cultural, and (even) political surroundings.

As the child grows, develops, and takes his place within a social milieu, he receives the impacts of those surroundings which have current and continuing dynamic value. It is these environments which take effect early in the child's development and which tend to have lasting effects upon his growth, his alternatives in further development, and his status as a member of his various communities.

For this reason, we deal particularly in this report with the non-formal educational processes: the child experiences;

he is guided and taught; he presents changes in his skills, abilities, attitudes, and generalized behavior. He has, of course, learned, but apart from the formal, established schooling system. That system ultimately must receive the child, become a new environment in his development, and seek to maintain existing behaviors or produce new ones.

For the purposes of this study, we will be mainly concerned with the non-formal environments rather than with the formal educational network. It is our hope that the aspects presented and reviewed will provide impetus for further case studies in other contexts, and that the model provided herein will be appropriate for such additional work in comparative education.

In Israel we are looking at a new nation, constructed and established not by an armed revolution but by action of the United Nations in 1948. It was only then that the wars began which have not yet come to an end.

Israel at its founding was populated by Jewish Palestinians, by immigrants from the nations of the dispersal, and by the remnants of the concentration camps of civilized Europe.

I <u>The development of environments in Israeli society and culture</u>.

1. Judaic concepts for child development in home and community.

As the State became established, the concern for its children and youth came only second to that of defense. In this period,

education was established in formal systems. These were operated by the state, by municipalities, by special groups such as kibbutz communities, and by the religious organizations. Beneath the formal systematic organization, however, there rests still the traditional Jewish concepts of education in the home and community as a unifying element. It is in this context that Judaism is reflected in the individual as in the state.

Thus we may note the Judaic concepts which endorse education as a family responsibility among a people where illiteracy has been rare for many centuries. These concepts have stressed study and learning of sacred themes as the male's highest level of achievement. Nevertheless, this focus on the male as scholar has not prevented the growth of female literacy if not, on occasion, eminence as a learned person in a family and community.[2]

We learn from the Book of Proverbs in the Bible that parents are teachers:

"Hear, my son, your father's instruction,
And reject not your mother's teaching;
For a graceful garland will they be for your head,
And a chain for your neck....."

And again:

"My son, if you receive my words
And store my commands within you,
Inclining your ear to wisdom,
And applying your mind to reason;
If you appeal to intelligence
And lift up your voice to reason;
If you seek her as silver
And search for her as for hidden treasure...

Then you will understand reverence for the Lord
And will discover the knowledge of God."

Thus there is the fundamental concern and drive in Judaism for learning, for its first priority, and for its relationship to religion and God. This is the summary of the basic and initial environment for the Jewish child in the observant home. It establishes early the affection for learning which is conspicuous historically and currently among Jewish families.

In the Talmudic writings of the Gemara, we find the stress upon the generations and the important role of the parent:

> "Whoever teaches his son teaches not alone his son but also his son's son, and so on to the end of all generations."[3]

From the Zohar, which are medieval writings, we are told that learning is to be combined with Jewish religious practices:

> "No one is so poor as he who is ignorant of the Torah and its commandments for this is all that can be considered as wealth..."[4]

Judaism teaches a love for learning and for the learner and it is inspired in the family. Learning is sweet, said the sages, and the child's first teacher, often the parent or an older family member would put drops of honey on the letters on a slate so that as the youngster first touched them, he brought the sweetness to his lips.[5] Thus, he learned more than only the letters. This love of learning came from the family and was fostered there as a natural sequence of life. The Israeli child, therefore, regardless of the intensity of his parents' religious observance and also regardless of their national origins, is encouraged to cling closely to their concerns for education. Efforts made in the family influence their own and the child's

continuing response to new opportunities for learning.

We must, of course, recall those restrictions which were placed upon many Jews of the Diaspora regarding their economic activities and occupations. Education within the community, for the most part, could serve as preparation for permitted work as well as for on-going religious participation.

2. Zionist concepts, practices, and development.

With the development of Israel and even before the establishment of the State, were joined the Jewish concepts of learning to the Zionist viewpoint. The return to Zion took its initial impetus from the imaginings and strivings of thinkers and doers; they came out of the advanced social thought of European Jews who saw no future for their co-religionists in the environment which oppressed so many of them. In spite of such "liberal" improvements as could be found in France and in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, there were the counter-effects of the Dreyfus case and the pogroms of Russia, the numerus clausus for admission to higher education, and the bars to democratic thought and participation that blocked the way from England to the heart of eastern Europe.

For the Zionists, the answer would have to be a homeland for the Jews in a land they never left,--Palestine. Thus, Theodore Herzl, a visionary, a Utopian with a dream, expressed in 1896, a crystallization of his thought and that of others. He wrote Der Judenstaat, the Jewish state, and outlined the basic tenets of Zionism, concluding that:

> "The Maccabeeans will rise again. The Jews who wish it will have their State. We shall live at last as free men on our own soil and die peacefully in our own homes. The world will

be freed by our liberty, enriched by our wealth, magnified by our greatness. And whatever we attempt there to accomplish for our own welfare, will react powerfully and beneficently for the good of humanity."[6]

In his book, "My People", Abba Eban wrote:

"Through Herzl the Jewish people overcame its passive role as the endurer. The Jews began to shape their own life and to take the future into their own hands."[7]

Amos Elon in his book, "The Israelis: Founders and Sons", called Zionism "that commitment to an idealistic assumption of man's perfectability."[8]

It was the Zionist view that the State would be a Jewish state, with democratic participation and respect for all its inhabitants. "The State of Israel," says the 1948 Declaration of Independence, "will be open for Jewish immigration and for the ingathering of the exiles." The State would not be a theologically-controlled one, and would guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education, and culture.[9]

Thus, the Israeli child grows and is nurtured by an environment which connects him with Jews, Christians, Arabs, and others. In his environment, three million Jews represent 84 per cent of the population, Arabs 12 per cent, Christians two per cent, and others a bit over one per cent.[10]

He may see, listen, and read. Especially read. In 1977, there were 13 daily newspapers in Hebrew, four in Arabic, and nine in other languages. UNESCO figures report that Israel ranks second in the world for the number of books published in proportion to its population.[11] Their children's books are especially noteworthy for their high artistic and literary standards.

His environment is full of sounds, and especially talk. Children and adults pause to hear the news on the hour, every hour, wherever they may be, except in school. On every bus, the pop music of the radio and the talk of the passengers subside into silence when the driver checks the time and says, "Listen, the news!" Or just turns up the volume.

The child may watch educational television in his school sponsored by the Israeli Ministry of Education and Culture. But, after hours, in his home, alas, he and his parents glue their eyes to the dregs of American "sitcoms" and they learn something of our language and culture. They may also pick up Jordan Television with occasional Hebrew sub-titles and plenty of fascinating commercials, but this, too, is essentially based on American media.

Cultural impacts upon the children and youth are evident in the fact that archeology, Biblical history, and the history of the Jewish people are presented in museums and displays in almost every city and town. There is a love affair between most Israelis and the living past which surrounds them, giving concrete form to places and events in the Bible and capturing the relationships between what happened and where it happened.

Adults and youth groups carry children to sites known and still available. The power of a visit to Masada is compounded in its effect on the young child with the connotations of the worn stones of the Second Temple's Western Wall. The environment is a living reference that imbues children with knowledge as well as with an emotional presence that connects them to the

concepts of their religion and their Zionist tenets.

3. Current and recent impacts.

Since the founding of the State, attention has been paid to the nature of the environment and its effects upon child development. Early on, the hospitals and clinics cared for the health needs of all children regardless of ability to pay or of ethnic origin. Israel, in this regard, is the image of the well-known "Jewish mother",--serving its charges the equivalent of hot chicken soup; warming and drying wet feet; and cautioning about catching a cold. The critical observer will note, on the other hand, the ever-present smoker who began in early youth and remains a health hazard in spite of numerous warning signs that are posted.

Museums and cultural centers are located in the major urban centers as well as in remote towns and rural communities. The environment offers something for every child, who needs only to reach out to be welcomed. Such facilities are supplemented by what appears to be a universal seeking after the prodigy, --centers for music and art (as well as programs on kibbutzim and moshavim) welcome and encourage the young musician, dancer, artist, or actor. World-renowned musicians offer auditions for the potential virtuoso who, when discovered, is nurtured and developed like the proverbial Olympic champion elsewhere. At the same time, neighborhood children, though only normally talented but interested, participate in youth orchestras, choirs, theatre groups, and so on.

I have been careful, thus far, to review the environments

which reflect non-school influences on the Israeli child: the family, the community in its Zionist orientation, the larger community in its preoccupation with the enhancement of individual potential.

All of this exists in a society with a Jewish ethnic mixture which represents at least three major groups. These include the Sefardic Jewish community, many of centuries-old standing as residents as well as recent refugees from Arab states and from North African countries. With its "Oriental" customs and often speaking Arabic, French, and possibly Ladino, this group is largely disadvantaged economically and politically, with large families, a strong religious dedication, and restrained enthusiasm for the education of women. The Sefardic population is, at this time, growing at a faster rate than are the other Jewish groups.

The second major group is the Ashkenazi Jewish segment, coming from a Western-oriented culture, North American, European, or South African, highly educated, thoroughly involved in the economic development of the country, and apparently wielding political power from the establishment of the state to this day.

This group includes philosophical Zionists as well as refugees from central and eastern Europe who suffered the Holocaust, the Soviet inflictions, and, even earlier, the disillusionment with western Christian culture. It was the child of an Ashkenazi father who, when told of the fate of the Jews in Europe's concentration camps, asked incredulously, "But why didn't our Army come to their rescue?" It is not only today's environment that makes such a question relevant.

The third group, including within it Sefardic and Ashkenazi members, identifies itself as the "sabra". Born in Israel of generations settled in the land, this group is, of course, becoming most numerous. For the most part sabra families did not experience the Holocaust, but they know the wars since Independence and before it. They take their Zionism more for granted, being imbued over the generations with Israel's historic and religious contexts.

For Jewish children growing up in Israel today, their different origins and group memberships still play an important part in affecting access to opportunity and in the development of life styles. Depending upon economic status, family emphasis on education for all its members, and guided receptivity to innovation, the child experiences a special environment which influences and perhaps determines his development from his early years.

At this point, a specific comment is in order. Any report on Israel would be irrelevant if it did not focus upon the one major element in the environment of the Israeli child which tends to influence and control all others. This is the perpetual state of siege, the experience of war or its ever-threatening shadow, the all-pervading awareness of danger to personal and national existence.

In studying the Jewish State and its conditions, we may not dismiss or ignore this fact which overhangs the lives of adults and children, with only that occasional, temporary relief that makes the renewal of the threat still more menacing. This environment, like no other, has been a factor in the development and education of Israel's children.

II Co-existing environments affecting children, families, and communities.

1. The state of siege.

We do not travel far in Israel without seeing the signs of air-raid shelters and protected zones. In small towns, moshavim, and kibbutzim, the concrete bunkers are marked, stocked, and protected, and serve as ever-present reminders of the nearness of danger.

Patrolling armed soldiers and reservists are in most business and commercial areas and on highways. Soldiers on leave are required to carry their arms with them and are ever present for protection.

A yellow school bus with thirty children, two teachers, and a driver, comes to a neighborhood park or museum. As the line of children moves with its teachers to the entrance (and later, returns to the bus), they are shepherded by the driver whose sub-machine gun is carried casually, perhaps, but in full view and readiness.

When children and adults go to a market, a department store, or a movie house, all bags are inspected by a guard who is stationed there for just that purpose. Visitors to the theatre, concerts, and other assemblies submit to such searches willingly, having seen or heard of murderous explosions caused by enemy terrorists. They have seen, or perhaps helped, when victims of such attacks, children or adults, needed medical attention or were already beyond it.

The state of siege is a daily experience, reinforced by the

sights of war, the news reports of local and foreign concern, the occasional overflights of Air Force planes, and, in some northern areas, the rumblings from bombings, shelling, and rifle fire close to the border.

There is for children and adults a continuing sense of impending danger and a feeling of precarious isolation. All activities are affected, modified, and sometimes curtailed, with regard to the possibility of attacks. Yet it is a paradox that work, creative activity, and recreation continue, apparently not suffering from such potentially detrimental influences. The Hebrew term, "Ein brera", "we have no other choice", seems to be effective in stimulating the continuities in daily life for individuals and their families. To our knowledge, the incidence of emotional disturbance or even of suicide, in Israel, is no different from, or perhaps less than, that in other western nations.

The experience is intensified and given full meaning at several levels. First, in almost all families, the father is a veteran of previous wars, has experienced service and combat, and continues in reserve service for about 30 days each year until age 55. The family whose father is absent from home on reserve duty is a common experience in Israel.

On a second level, a common experience occurs when an entire class of 18 year-olds, boys and girls, leave school and begin their military service: three years for the boys; two for the girls. Student deferments are possible and total exemption may be granted for reasons of health or of conscience.

In the Israeli context, service with the defense forces is expected and is a focal point in the lives of children in the elementary and secondary schools. Such service is generally a basis for pride and positive community feeling, beginning early in the child's life experience and as part of his anticipated personal commitment.

2. The kibbutz as environment.

While all of the foregoing discussion is reflective of all aspects of child development in Israel, special attention must be paid to the kibbutz or cooperative movement.

In brief, the kibbutz is a communal village in which all property is owned in common by all the members. Run as a simple democracy, kibbutz affairs are conducted by elected committees subject to the decisions of regularly-held general meetings of the entire membership.[12]

While kibbutzim were established initially for work on the land, their success in agricultural production and the needs of the national economy led them to expand to various industrial enterprises. Thus a kibbutz with a large turkey farm, a banana plantation, and cotton fields, may also produce plastic sheeting and solar cells. Representing four per cent of Israel's Jewish population, kibbutzim contribute about 12 per cent of the gross national product.

There are kibbutzim today in which the third or fourth generation has reached maturity. Over 75 per cent of the kibbutz-born remain in the kibbutz despite the attractions of the cities. In the army, kibbutz members are about 15 per cent of the officers

group. Twenty-five per cent of the casualties in the 1967 war were from the kibbutzim.

The kibbutz movement believes in personal labor and places equal value on all kinds of work and so is unique in its principles, in its productivity, and in the special development of its children.

Kibbutz education has been based upon the communal living of children from the earliest age. As a part of living in an organized children's house, the group eats, lives, studies together, and constitutes a miniature kibbutz with the advice of trained teachers and group leaders. Children graduate from one house to another as they advance in age, still remaining with their comrades. They visit daily with their parents at specified times and retain family relationships beyond those of the children's house.

At one time, kibbutz principles stressed the full-time living, including sleeping away from the parents, in the children's house. Recently, with increasing affluence of kibbutzim and the feasibility of expanded housing for each family, the system has provided for children to sleep in the home of their parents and to expand their family activities and participation. Thus, original principles of child development have been modified to meet parental pressures; kibbutz economic status tends to make such change practicable.

In this total environment, the relationships which have influenced child development include mutual support among peers,

thoughtful guidance and leadership by adults, the influence of the dominant kibbutz philosophy on the activities of all its members, and the effective "town-meeting" democracy without established hierarchies but where every participant's worth is noted.

On the other hand, researchers have noted the kibbutz child's strong control over emotions: they are encouraged not to cry, to show fear, to express hatred; or to develop habits of solitary withdrawal. Some observers have commented that the tough Israeli, in general, is not given to much emotional display, but such generalizations are difficult to analyze or even to verify.

We may record, however, that holidays, festivals, birthdays, weddings, and deaths are observed with generous displays of emotion among kibbutzniks as among others in the population.

Most kibbutz children go on to regional secondary schools where their interests in higher education are often implemented by preparation for admission and later support. While post-secondary education programs for kibbutz youth are expected to relate to the needs and priorities of the community, kibbutzim have often subsidized such "non-productive" studies as in music, arts, literary studies etc.

In sum, for the Israeli kibbutz child, the environment is essentially rural, replete with reminders of war, and fully supportive of his personal development and group participation. For the kibbutz child, the curriculum and the extra-curriculum are the community and the kibbutz philosophy in action. If the term "elite" may be used with regard to child development in Israel, it is appropriate for that of the kibbutz.

3. Orthodox communities in a pluralistic society.

The child of the Orthodox Jewish family is contained in an environment that is a continuous reminder of his religious commitments. Full observance of the numerous commandments, beginning with the Sabbath, is open, regular, expected, and serious. The males of the families, whether of oriental or western origin, are fully dedicated to the required practices of the faith and, from the earliest years, the young child is included.

To an increasing extent, as indicated earlier, girls and women are engaged in studies. In order to maintain and carry out the religious precepts in the home, this has always been a necessity, and for young girls today, their awareness of the involvement of their brothers is even more motivating.

The child is engaged and fully caught up in the demands of Sabbath observance, of cleanliness, food preparation, ritual prayer in Hebrew, and distinctive dress. Schooling for the orthodox Jew is, of course, available in the study groups of the community. State-supported religious education networks also provide elementary and secondary schooling. Orthodox kibbutzim are flourishing and are affiliated with the religious political parties as well as with effective and growing youth movements.[13]

As we observe, from the outside, the young boy with long side-curls and ever-present head covering, his distinctiveness represents his overt attachment to religious principles, which may in itself distinguish him from other Israelis.

For girls, the fully-covered look, sleeves well below the elbow, long stockings, and high necklines, are also distinctive enough to set them apart from the freer-living Israeli girl. This appearance of separateness, together with the complexities of religious practice, makes for a deliberately-established life pattern which permeates and influences the development of the child.

He or she will usually remain within this life pattern and perpetuate it for himself and his children. His recreations and family interests will remain within the confines of the community. For higher education there are the yeshivot for explicit religious study as well as the Bar Ilan University which is Orthodox in orientation but which provides instruction in the subject matter of the world at large.

Children in Orthodox families will speak Yiddish as well as Hebrew, will learn the mother's work and possible the father's trade. They will attend school and may, in time, be found on university campuses as students or teachers; in soldier's uniform carrying the weapon and wearing the skullcap; in business, industry, government service, and in artistic and literary occupations. They are imbued with fervent religious attitudes and display them in solemn awareness of the rightness of their cause.

While the majority of Israelis do not fully espouse the orthodox religious viewpoints and practices, and while exemptions and state subventions are frequently resented, many Israelis acknowledge that the Jewishness of the nation may well be most effectively nourished and sustained by the orthodox religious community. For this, they say, "We are willing to pay."

4. Immigrants: status, needs, conditions affecting children.

Israel's Jewish population increased from 1948 to 1972 by over 2 million. Of this number, 62 per cent was due to immigration from over 70 different countries. The Israeli child of this period, and still today, who is not himself an immigrant, is surrounded by and subjected to all that such population change brings with it.[14]

The child himself, possibly once an immigrant, is aware of other children who speak a language he does not know. Their families in nearby apartments may favor unusual foods, wear strange clothes, and may present differing living customs and social practices. They may be different in size of family as well as in economic status and cultural aspects.

The Israeli child is likely to be relatively tolerant of the children of "strangers", for they soon learn his language and become neighborhood and school playmates. In contrast with the lessening differences of his peers may be the longer-lasting more rigid practices of his immigrant parents. These distinctions often lead to community and family friction, even though settlement policies for immigrants tend to place them among former immigrants of their own nationality. The established Israeli child, therefore, accepts, orients, and even socializes the newcomers' children through the normal every-day processes of child living.

For the immigrant child himself, the new situation often represents a wrenching change from the environment in which he was initially nourished. The impact of climate may be as strong

as that of the physical environment, the tempo of the new life and its often bewildering complexities. Add to this the probable state of disequilibrium of the adults in his family, and his basis for orientation and adaptation is weak, indeed. The need for jobs, for appropriate housing, for carrying out the daily activities of shopping and food preparation,--all are difficult enough for experienced adults. For the child, his highest adaptive strengths may be called upon.

Such strength comes from other children, for the most part. They may speak his first language or, by sign and sound, they may help him to learn adequate Hebrew beyond that offered in more formal education. Equally important, the child is introduced by other children to the mores, opportunities, and pitfalls of the community in terms of recreation, adventure, earning money, and similar enterprises. Of course, the child is introduced to the nearest school, the community centers for cultural and sports activities, religious houses, and other facilities. There is little doubt of the effectiveness of such processes for it is the children who surpass their parents in learning the environment and in making their accommodations to it.

Public facilities to assist new immigrants include special agencies as well as radio programs and publications in their own languages. For the culturally deprived, special opportunities are available: extended study hours in school, individual tutoring, enrichment projects in arts, music, theatre, and, for many, university scholarships.

When the immigrant youth is 18, he or she will find in

military service numerous opportunities to improve language skills and to develop specializations for military as well as civilian use. Many immigrants first learned the basics in the IDF for know-how which helped to establish their later careers or even for eventual entrance into higher education.

For the Israeli child, therefore, whether of ancient immigrant status or current, the environment outside the formal educational system depends upon other children and non-school resources provided by the community.

Among some established Israelis, the atmosphere of immigration brings forth expressions of resentment of increased competition for already-scarce housing, of the exemptions from taxation in the purchase of household appliances, television receivers, and automobiles, and of the costs for the reception of new immigrants. Ironically, the Israeli also sees in new immigrants an important addition to the vitality of the population, new companions in the common cause, and greater strength for the Zionist State. In all of this, emphasis is given to the child as national resource, since it is the youngster who carries within him the least burden of his earlier life outside Israel.

5. Urban environments.

The population of Israel is mainly urban: 86 per cent of the people live in 104 towns and cities, of whom half are in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa.

Nevertheless, as Amos Elon points out, it is extremely difficult for individuals to achieve that anonymity which both a blessing of life in great urban centers and a cause for some

of its pains.[15]

Most Israelis live almost painfully close to each other, in small flats, with little privacy. Thus there is a degree of neighborliness infinitely more intense than that found in other urban societies. For adults it can sometimes be excruciatingly hard to bear. For children, the conditions can be much less of a problem: they are closer: they play, work, and fight in an open manner; they form a sub-society often reflective of that which surrounds them. If isolation is sought by an individual child, the difficulty is obvious. More often, children may impose isolation upon a member of the group who has upset its norms.

A large part of the Israeli population still lives almost tribally within the confines of a particular ethnic group or mother tongue. In such circumstances, tragedy rarely remains isolated within the narrow confines of family intimacy. On a hot summer afternoon, it takes but a short while for most people on the street to know that the red-headed boy from number 5, who was only nineteen, whose mother beats her rug on the balcony too early in the morning, whose father works for the city, was killed this morning during an artillery barrage on the frontier.[16]

The closeness of life, in all its harshness, sadness, and joys, may be a deterrent to individual growth and creativity. Yet it has also promoted a sense of cohesion so strong that it makes the country seem more like a big village than a state.

Aside from the established networks of schools in the urban centers, communities are often organized to provide such extra-

curricular services as classes for music, the arts, special scientific interests, language, museum visits, and trips to historical sites. Children often drift in and out of such activities, often impelled by the quality of adult leadership, by the shifting interests of peers, or by the experience of success or frustration within them.

One has only to observe the activities after the regular school day or after the Sabbath to note the variety of activities, the relationships among young children, adolescents, and adults in work of common interest, to verify the richness of experience which is possible. The nearest approximation to such programs may be that of the Pioneer Houses in major Soviet cities. For Israeli children and youth, the less formal organization appears to be relevant and attractive.

On a somewhat different level are the several youth movements which embody specific ideological and political programs. Based upon voluntary membership and independent effort, the youth movements enroll school age children as well as working youth. They are a framework for social contact and a natural meeting ground for boys and girls. They serve as an instrument to enhance the social status of the members, to foster ideals and devotion to national goals, to promote voluntary social welfare activities, and to channel attitudes and norms useful for social integration.[17]

The youth movements are all, with the exception of the Scouts, affiliated with adult organizations and serve as auxiliaries for them. Thus there are youth groups devoted to ideologies that range from the political left to the center and right; from

religious to non-observant; some are affiliated with the various labor groups; others with the major kibbutz networks. The Scouts, including Arab and Druze youth, maintain ties with the international scout movement.

By its volunteer nature, a youth group tends to be more or less attractive to potential members, depending also on the existing affiliations of brothers, sisters, parents, or admired friends. Activities, such as camping, exploring, cultural and political projects, serve to promote the choice of membership in one or another youth movement or in none.

6. Environments for Arab children.

It would not be appropriate in this report to engage in contention over the rights and wrongs of Jewish-Arab relationships in Israel. Our concern is with conditions and their influences upon children and I shall continue to maintain this focus.

At this time, there are Israeli Arabs who are citizens of the State and there are Arabs in the Administered Territories (Gaza, the West Bank) who have been there since the border changes of 1967. For the former group there have been interactions, development, and change. In the latter group, processes have to some extent been similar; in some ways they have been distinctly different.[18]

Here are some important data: in 1971, half the Arab population of Israel was under 15 years of age. Almost three-quarters of the Arabs were younger than 30. Just over half the Arab population are now urban dwellers, with half the Arab work force employed away from their places of residence.

With improved medical services, the infant death rate dropped from 49 per thousand in 1951 to 38 per thousand in 1971. Eighty-four per cent of Arab women now have their babies in hospitals; they are served by established and mobile mother-child centers across the land. The natural increase for Israeli Arabs in 1978 was 33 per thousand, one of the highest in the world.

In 1948, the Arab population was largely illiterate. It now has a higher degree of literacy than prevails in most, if not all, Arab countries. Arabs and Druze are active in political life, with a voter participation rate of over 80 per cent in all elections to date.[19]

Education for the Arab child has been developed since 1948 and has resulted in a reduction of the traditional passive or even hostile view of parents to educational opportunity. Education is compulsory and free for all Israeli children aged 5 to 15. A measure of the change in community acceptance of education is the school enrollment in recent years of 95 per cent of the boys and 80 per cent of the girls of compulsory school age.

While secondary education has developed impressively, problems result from the administration of the schools by non-governmental agencies,--municipalities, local councils, and religious bodies. There is a lack of administrative know-how, a lack of competent teachers, and an imbalance in curricular emphasis, with greater focus on vocational than on academic education.

We may describe in continuing detail the changes for the

better in nutrition, health care, education, and economic status for Arab families and their children. These are, in effect, new environments for most of them, and in most or all of these aspects, Israeli Arabs surpass their brethren in the Arab nations.

Nevertheless, the environment for the Arab child is also a special one:he is a minority in the land; his language is not that of the majority or of its agencies; his family size and cultural processes are different; his dress and his manner are not those of the majority; his religion is either Islam or Christianity. Yet, as a citizen of the state, he is entitled to rights and recognitions which are either grudgingly given or which he himself does not grasp.[21]

Jewish employers hire Arab workers, but relationships between them are distant and suspicious. Arabs are equal members of the Histadrut, the major labor union, but their relationships with fellow workers are similarly distant.

The child is in school with other Arab children; he lives in the environment of his own family in the Arab village or section of the urban center. While access to secondary education is available, he or she must often challenge the reluctant father to permit attendance and completion. The numbers of Arabs who are literate have grown, but the enrollments in higher education are disproportionately small.

In the schools, the curriculum includes Arabic, Arab history and Islamic studies. Out of the schools, there are

Arabic newspapers, 14 hours daily of radio broadcasts in Arabic, and Arabic sub-titles on television programs. For the Arab child, the environment is focused on Arab themes, but the child must contend also with the learnings he must undertake to advance in the Jewish-dominated culture. At the least, he must become proficient in Hebrew and, if possible, in English. The difficulties and the obstacles are severe.

Education authorities of Israel recognize curricular and other deficiencies in Arab education and seek to employ more competent teachers for a more relevant curriculum. Under current circumstances, improvements in this domain hold a lesser national priority.

The likely futures for Israeli Arab children and youth include an environment with the following characteristics: continuing growth in their numbers; further recognition by the traditionalists that education is a necessity and a means of confronting an uncertain status; and, finally, a political impetus within the present structure beyond that yet undertaken.

III Summary and conclusions.

In the development of Israel, patterns of influential environments have followed the anticipated ones involving home, family, community, and culture. We have determined that this examination of the case of Israel, while serving as a model for such studies in other states or in regions, presents not only those anticipated environments but several unique ones which are not easily observed elsewhere.

The environments for child development in Israel have been blended so that the family as contributor is further defined with reference to ranges of religious observance, to ethnic group membership, to immigrant or non-immigrant status, to community adherence from city to town to moshav to kibbutz. Above all, the environments make their impact within a continuous state of military threat and defensive vigilance.

The ideology which formed the State, Zionism, is blended necessarily with the religious precepts of Judaism. These, too, in surrounding the child with "givens", vary in their effects depending upon their value to the child's milieu and to his own developing adherences. In times of stress for the nation, there is a relentless and strengthening unity that brings the tenets of Zionism and Judaism to high levels of dominance as environmental influences.

Much is said of the place in Israeli society of the kibbutz community and its members. The environment for kibbutzniks is so determined, controlled, and ultimately effective that the impact on the nation is much beyond the actual numbers of kibbutzniks in the population. On the other hand, most Israeli children experience environments of different quality in their urban communities with varied effects. The urban milieu, where privacy is at a premium and where there is a minimum of preplanned experience, provides a setting which dominates the lives of the majority of Israeli children and their families and which predisposes their particular development.

For the Arab child there is a potential for development within

a set of environments, the traditional and the innovative. The home and community of the Arab child, though essentially rural and religion-bound, differ from those of children in other Arab countries. The continual mingling of lives, cultures, expectations, languages, and opportunities has, for Israeli Arab children, already extended their vision and their grasp. Yet it has also exacerbated their uncertainties as to identity and general loyalty.

The Israeli Arab is an Israeli citizen but with a special sense of minority status that Jews in Israel from other countries (particularly Arab nations) may recall as part of their own experience before they immigrated. The environment of enhanced physical and economic well-being competes with the environment of Arab Moslem distinctiveness.

Israeli authorities are aware of the apparent dilemma and offer to ameliorate educational conditions while refraining from interference in cultural, social, or religious matters of concern to Arab citizens.

It is difficult to foresee the future. But it would be worthwhile to indicate that while the State of Israel is firmly established in the region, the region itself is not stable nor does it portend stability, calm, and peace.

International and intra-regional pressures have tended to fan the flames of hostility, of mutual suspicion, and of anti-Zionism, which is easily translated into anti-Semitism in the well-known sense. Alliances and unification agreements have

been made and broken among Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Libya. The greatest instance of such a fracture results from the treaty of peace signed by Egypt with Israel,--a fact which paradoxically has brought forth threats that would substitute new wars for this peace.

The Israeli child, Jewish and Arab, lives well within the stress-fields of such conditions and the ensuing implications. The Arab child senses an equivocal relationship with his fellow Israelis. The Jewish child continues to link his Arab peers with the Arabs of the encirclement and to find their common citizenship a jarring condition. Thus, the Israeli responds to external threats with even greater unity among Jewish Israelis and closer adherence to their most common environments.

With the reduction of tensions, the environments may bring forth higher standards and norms for the material goods of life, while cultural and social developments may go even further than they have in seeking out and emulating the most alluring elements of the developed West. The development of children would take place under conditions somewhat more like those in other lands and with similar inputs and outcomes, unless the existing environments of Judaism-Zionism are strong enough to prevail.

Until such circumstances are achieved, researchers would do well to continue to examine this unique case, to note the elements of its singularity, and to develop parallel studies in other countries.

Footnotes:

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